

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
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FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9412
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PGOV, NI
SUBJECT: FMG ANNOUNCES A NATIONAL SYSTEM OF IDENTITY CARDS

1. ACCORDING TO A JULY 6 ANNOUNCEMENT BY INTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMISSIONER UMARU SHINKAFI, THE FMG PLANS TO INSTITUTE A NATIONAL SYSTEM OF IDENTIFICATION CARDS FOR ALL NIGERIAN CITIZENS. THE IDENTITY CARD WILL CARRY A NATIONAL PERSONAL NUMBER, FULL NAME, MAIDEN NAME, DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH, SEX, BLOOD GROUP, SIGNATURE AND A FINGER PRINT OF THE CARD HOLDER.

2. SHINKAFI ADDED THAT THE SYSTEM WILL BE IMPLEMENTED IN THREE STATES, THE FIRST OF WHICH WOULD COVER CIVIL SERVANTS IN THE FEDERAL AND STATE PUBLIC SERVICES, MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES, STAFFS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS, PARASTATALS AND INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING, INCLUDING THE STUDENTS. THE SECOND PHASE WOULD COVER WORKERS IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR, INCLUDING PARTIALLY STATE-OWNED COMPANIES AND SELF-EMPLOYED PERSONS, WHILE THE THIRD PHASE WOULD COVER THE ENTIRE POPULATION.
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SHINKAFI DID NOT SAY WHEN THE SYSTEM WILL BE SET UP, BUT HE IMPLIED THAT IT WILL BEGIN BEFORE THE END OF 1978.

3. COMMENT: WE CAN IMAGINE THERE ARE THREE INTERCONNECTED MOTIVATIONS FOR THE FMG'S DECISION TO INSTITUTE THE SYSTEM. OBVIOUSLY IT WOULD BE

AIMED AT INJECTING SOME ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER IN
A COUNTRY WHERE NO RELIABLE OR COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM
OF IDENTIFICATION EXISTS. A SECOND MOTIVATION
FOR THE FMG WOULD BE THE FACT THAT SUCH A SYSTEM
WOULD BE USEFUL FOR SECURITY REASONS IN THE
ANTICIPATABLE TURBULENCE OF 1979. FINALLY,
THE FMG MAY BE CONTINUING ITS
POLICY OF SLOWLY ENTERING THE CENSUS POOL AT THE
SHALLOW END. WE WOULD ASSUME THAT, IF THE SYSTEM
IS EVER IMPLEMENTED, IT WILL PROVIDE ANOTHER
SET OF SURROGATE CENSUS DATA SIMILAR TO THE
VOTER REGISTRATION FIGURES.
EASUM

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Message Attributes

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